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THE PRAYER OF JESUS

FOR

THE ONENESS OF HIS PEOPLE;

BEING THE

SUBSTANCE OF DISCOURSES,

DELIVERED IN

ST. STEPHEN'S HALL, IN THE CITY OF ST. JOHN.

BY THE

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"That they all may be one."—JOHN XVII. 20-22.

SAINT JOHN, N. B.

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PREFACE.

THE subject of Christian Union is one to which no one of God's children can possibly be indifferent. Believers *are* one, essentially one, recognized as one by their Great Head. But this essential oneness is too little felt by them; they act, too often, as if there were no common ties among them, yea, very often, as if they belonged to different families, each having a Father, a Saviour, a Spirit, a Heaven, a Hell, of its own.

The subject was brought before the Free Church congregation by the author; and many Christians belonging to other denominations: Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, gladly listened to it; and the request has been largely expressed that the whole should be given to the public. The author regrets that the multiplicity of his engagements has prevented him from amplifying or enlarging his notes; they are given to the public, however, as they are, with the earnest hope that they may awaken in the minds of many Christians a desire for a closer intercourse with one another, and, in all, a desire for a closer walk with God. It is the author's dearest wish that those in this City, and in this Province, that are "Israelites indeed," should know each other better than they do; and if the publication of these notes shall call forth any practical measure in order to that blessed end, he will rejoice.

St. John, February, 1850.

DISCOURSES, &c.

THE PRAYER OF JESUS.

“ That they all may be one.” — JOHN xvii. 20-22.

APART from the character and location of its figures, the beauty of a painting consists in the due arrangement of light and shade; in order to which the most diverse colours are employed, and these are so mingled and applied as to produce the nearest possible resemblance to the object intended to be delineated. Not one of the colours so employed loses its natural properties, yet all are so blended together, each being, as it were, fused in the other, as that the demureness of the darker is softened down, and the delicacy of the lighter colours rendered stronger by mutual contact.

In nature—how discordant the elements of which it is composed—fire that, if uncontrolled, would speedily enwrap our world in a mantle of living flame—water that, if left to itself, would, ere long, render our world an uninhabitable morass—air that, if not rightly regulated, would lie like an irreeistible incubus on the earth, or expand itself into regions whither we could not follow it, in either case destructive of animal vitality—earth that, if ungoverned by certain fixed and determinate laws, would either refuse to bear us on its surface, or yield us the support and sustenance which our constitutional organization requires. Yet, how beautiful is nature: earth revolving now around its grand centre with as precise regularity as when at first it sprang into being—summer with its balmy breezes—winter with its freezing winds—spring with its reviving influences, and autumn with its golden crops. How deep the wisdom displayed in the creation of all! how constant the care exercised in preserving all! Our world the habitation of God's image—the sun its source of light and heat—the ocean its vast watering place. Beauty, order, harmony existing among elements in themselves discordant, yet mixing with each other, and all together dwelling in unity.

In regard to our congregation—how varied the temperaments, dispositions, and minds of which the body is composed. There are not two faces in this large assembly that present to an observer, however careful he be, precisely the same features, or nearly the same expression. There is far from a visible uniformity, and yet there is a gladsome, lovely unity. "Of one heart and of one mind, we are met together in one place." "And he that walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks is in our midst."

In my text, Jesus prays for his people that then were, and for all who should afterwards believe on him, "that they may be one." "Unity is strength" is an aphorism, the truthfulness of which experience attests. Christ's people have many enemies, who have on their side the strength of hell and the world's opposition to true holiness, and, therefore, they require, being "a little flock," to stand and fight close together. But they likewise owe their being to a common source; they have one Father; they own fraternity with Jesus, and they are wrought upon by a common spirit; and they fight one fight of faith; and they look for a common victory; and they wait for one home. Why should they fall out by the way?

This subject presents a very wide field of inquiry and meditation—one in which I may come in contact with the errors of some, and the prejudices of others, and the preconceived opinions of many more; and yet, by none of these will I be driven from the faithful elucidation of my subject; and I trust I will be pardoned by those who may possibly differ from me in the views I may advance. I accord to them what I claim for myself, the right and the privilege of judging for myself in matters of religion. I will not knowingly wound the conscience of any Christian.

I would desire, with God's help and blessing, to set this subject before you under three different heads:—

- I. I would shew what this unity *is not*.
- II. What it is.
- III. The advantages of it.

1st. This unity for which our Saviour prays is not unity in ignorance. The ancient inhabitants of our fatherland were Druids, as to their religion. The surface of their country was one vast forest. In the depths of its dreary solitudes were the

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druidical altars set up. On these were offered to unknown divinities the choice one of every family—the helpless infant as well as the man of mature years. The more dearly prized the chosen victim was by a parent's heart, or a family's affection, just the more precious and praiseworthy the sacrifice. To this Moloch system of the olden time there answers the Juggernaut of modern days. There is no rival to either. Each stands, during its day, on a basis all its own. Its mysticism attracts the weak and the superstitious, while its cruelty checks and thoroughly overpowers all opposition that might possibly be offered to its sway. Is it for a unity like this that the Prince of Peace prays? No. This unity is not unity in error. The Jews are united as to their views of Jehovah's character and government; and still in their exile do they comfort themselves with this saying, "The temple of the Lord—The temple of the Lord are we." Yet Jesus of Nazareth is not looked to as their Saviour, nor the Messiah of the Bible honoured as their King. The carnal spirit has blinded them to the spirituality of God's kingdom. They know neither themselves nor God. The followers of the false prophet Mahomet are united in their religious worship, and yet they know not Jesus. The God whom they worship is a sensual God, and the heaven which they expect to enjoy is a sensual heaven. Though they may cry aloud from Mecca to the furthest corners of their land, "The sword or the Koran," their unity is founded in error, and cannot be that for which Jesus prays. The Socinians affect to be united in their views of religion, yet, being agreed on the very point of Christ's *mere humanity*, to which the whole gospel of Christ is openly antagonistic, their unity is not that for which Jesus prays. The Romish church pretends to this unity; it is not her possession. There may be in her uniformity as to worship; but there is uniformity in the *church-yard*, while there of unity there is none. Uniformity is not unity; or, if vain men count it so, it is not the unity for which Christ prays; for, let one in her communion declare that Christ is the only Saviour, that the mass is no sacrifice, and that Jesus is the true sacrifice *once* offered on the cross to take away the sins of the world, that it is contrary to the very genius of Christianity to "make any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth," and he is immediately deprived of

his liberty, and consigned to the gloomy and loathsome dungeon. Had our Presbyterian forefathers, who by God's help were enabled to disinter the pure word of God from the rubbish of Popish blindness and intolerance, and to plant the standard of Christian liberty on the ruins of that decaying system,—had they laid down their conscientious convictions at the feet of either priestly or kingly power,—had they declared their willingness to allow that the Bible should remain a sealed book, that it should rot unread in the cell of the monastery, or be chained to the reading-desk of some damp and unfrequented chapel,—had they torn into shreds the standard which conscience, echoing the voice of God, had commissioned them to unfurl,—had they submitted to the yoke of human ordinances, and had they consented to think only as men permitted them, and to speak only as men in authority gave them utterance,—there might have been uniformity such as Rome may, perhaps, with justice claim: the stern monotonous uniformity of death. But, oh, there could not have been the native, heaven-born unity, for which our Saviour prayed. How united were the sons of Abraham when, in the height of their self-exalting enthusiasm, they cried out, concerning him that would have saved them: "Away with him, away with him; crucify him, crucify him!" How united were the followers of Mahomet when they gave to their brethren the fearful alternative: "the sword or the koran"! How united are the devils in hell against God's glory; but, oh, their unity is the conspiracy of the damned, and is as opposite to the unity for which the Saviour prayed, as is light to darkness. Surely the time is not far remote when all such unity shall be broken up and consigned forever to the darkness whence it emanated; when unity in ignorance and unity in error shall together be dissolved; when men shall be at one with each other, as the fruit of their union with God. This is the unity for which our Master prayed, the unity for which we must pray and labour, and which, when found, we must be careful to preserve: a unity of hearts enlightened by the spirit of God, and by him sanctified. This shall be preserved without uniformity in external things. Even as uniformity were a blemish in nature, so were it a blemish in the church. It may be that the lack thereof may frequently occasion controversy, yet, even then the controversy shall be without virulence, and shall issue only in

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the clearer setting forth of great truths. There may be those here that are opposed to all controversy, and especially upon matters of religion. I can sympathize with you in your feelings, and, in a measure, appreciate your motives; but the history of the past encourages me to hope that, though controversies shall continue so long as truth shall be assailed, yet that these controversies shall be maintained without rancour, and in a spirit of mutual love and forbearance. Only let it be remembered that error seeks quiescence, it does not wish to be disturbed, and it is ever uttering its thunders against those that may desire to arouse it. It is ever crying "Peace, peace, while there is no peace." Nor does it hesitate to pronounce a woe upon those that threaten to intrude upon its wide domain. "These men that have turned the world upside down are come hither also": such was the cry once uttered against the apostles. It was the war-cry of aroused error; and to this day it is sent forth against the warriors of the cross. If, then, it must be, that error shall rage when its domains are invaded, give me the excitement of living truth; far rather would I roll in a well-found vessel on the surface of a troubled sea, than lie like a log in the quiescence of pestilential error.

II. I would desire, in the second place, to show what this unity is for which our Saviour prays.

1st. It is a unity of faith and profession. Paul exhorteth both the Ephesian and Philippian churches "to be of one mind"; and he presseth upon the members of the Corinthian church "to speak the same thing, being perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." And how beautiful is the picture given us of the primitive church, when the remembrance of her departed Master was yet green in her memory: the members thereof were "*of one heart and of one mind.*" Eden was fair, and the world in its first estate was very good; God himself pronounced it so: no sin, no sorrow, no curse there. So, the church in her first love, and in her original habiliments, stands before us *one*: one in faith and one in profession. There were in her many minds differently constituted as to character and capacity—Philip was not Andrew, nor Peter, John; yet they were one in faith. Peter displayed his in his ardent zeal; John his, in his holy meekness and child-like spirit. They had consented to be taught by the Holy Ghost, to receive the things that he should bring

to their remembrance concerning Jesus ; and they had resolved to "hold forth the word of life." The pride of their hearts and their narrow prejudices had all been laid aside, and they had learned to look even upon a converted Samaritan as a brother or sister in Christ Jesus. This is the unity for which Jesus prays: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." A unity of faith and a unity of profession. It is true that the church in this Province is divided into many sections ; but the ark was, by God's command, divided into many chambers, and yet there was but one ark after all. So, there is but one ark—the Christian church—divided, though it be, into many separate compartments. Who so foolish as to attempt to prove that because the animals in one chamber of the ark differed from those in another chamber, that there were more arks than one ? Or, perhaps, because the first animals introduced into the ark might be elephants, therefore, all the rest must be elephants likewise ? Equally futile were the attempt to prove that because there are many sections in the Protestant church of this land, there is really more than *one church* : one catholic spouse of the Lord Jesus. Whatever be the external development of that *one faith*, if the interior arrangement be according to the mind of God, if the great fundamentals of our most holy faith be hid in the heart, if to maintain these we hold not our lives dear unto us, if to advance these we count no labour too arduous, no sacrifice too costly, and all with the view of promoting the glory of God and of his Son Jesus Christ : then call us Presbyterians, call us Episcopalians, call us by any other human name, however opprobrious it may be deemed, yet we are brethren. For the same Holy Spirit hath taught us the same holy truths, and though we may be able to bring out each a different development of these truths ; yet their native purity is not diminished, nor is their enduring and life-giving influence repressed. The same light both in kind and degree may be sent forth through many various media ; and yet it is not the medium which makes the light, nor is it the medium by which the brilliancy of the light ought to be measured ; so in regard to the essentials of our faith, they may be sent forth through our medium of Presbyterianism, or through that of Episcopacy, or through that of Independency ; and yet the faith is one, and the profession is one, though as to variety or density, the channels of its manifestation may differ. "We

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have this treasure," said the apostle, "in earthen vessels." Who so foolish as to confound the treasure with the vessel—the jewel with the casket. If even Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles could, in all sincerity, acknowledge himself to be but an *earthen vessel*, surely none of those who claim the monopoly of successionship will set themselves above *their head*. Then, my hearers, what respect and reverence soever ye may pay to the earthen vessel, never forget that that which is truly valuable is the treasure that is within. Presbyterianism and Episcopacy are only the vessels. "Christ crucified" is the golden treasure. See, then, that ye prefer not the shell to the kernel. Adorn the mere vessel as you may, give it the support of the kings of the earth, and engrave upon its exterior the most splendid array of an earthly heraldry, still it is but the vessel; yea, a vessel of earth; and ere many ages shall have passed by, it shall have crumbled and disappeared for ever, while the treasure within, disencumbered of its earthly adornments and costly appendages of human growth, shall stand forth most beautiful in its very nakedness—most worthy of honour and of all praise when rising above the rubbish of human systems. Nor is this truth hidden from believers now. Bring Christians together in friendly intercourse, and they will soon recognise and own each other as brethren, and in the holy communion of heavenly feeling, in the sweet interchange of Christian sentiment, and in the general acknowledgment of indebtedness to sovereign grace—the mere externals of religion are lost sight of—"the beauty of the Lord" is admired.

2d. The unity for which Jesus prays is unity of affection. It is only among Christians that real affection has its dwelling-place. There is a principle that bears its name among men in general, but what a changeful thing it is—now here, now there—like the tiny feather floating aloft and now below, just as the breeze's fitful energy urges it forward, lifts it upward, or leaves it unsustained to gravitate towards the earth. But true love dwells in the hearts of God's children. It is the first fruit of the Spirit that dwelleth in them. "The fruit of the Spirit is love." This love in them embraces the whole human family, and hence their prayers and labours for the world's conversion unto God. It embraces specially *the brethren*, and hence their sympathy with each other, both in joy and in sorrow. It is unhappily true, that in these days this joyous principle is

but inefficient. We do not discover many evidences of its power, yea even of its very existence. My hearers, is it not so that even among ourselves there is very little of this holy affection displayed? Enmity, with its many strings, gives forth discordant sounds amongst us. Do we not profess to hold by Jesus Christ, *one Lord*—do we not pray for His Spirit that He may influence and actuate us in all we do—do we not pray that the same mind may be in us which was also in Christ Jesus—do we not speak as if our hearts had been really opened, as if we had in reality received the truth, as if the Spirit were indeed sanctifying, and quickening, and preparing us for the joy and blessedness of the upper sanctuary? Yet surely the very breathings of enmity in our hearts must be in opposition to the Spirit's work, even as they are hateful to the Spirit's love and meekness. He that nourishes hatred in his heart towards a brother is deserving of the highest reprobation; how much more when that exists in the family of Jesus. The love of Jesus is the pattern of the Christian's love. How deep, how earnest, how constant, *how unsearchable* the love of Christ—it shone forth in his every look, yes, even when he looked upon poor fallen Peter it was a look of love. It softened his very rebukes: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt." There was deep love there—love that would not allow Him to "break the bruised reed, or to quench the smoking flax." And even when suspended in bitterest agony between the earth and heaven, *he died loving*. His life was a life of love—his death was a death of love. From the manger to the cross, and from the cross to glory, His whole career is just a full and clear development of love, for "God is love." And in living, and in dying, and in living again, He only developed Himself. Oh, it is by forgetting Jesus—it is by forgetting his peerless excellence, by closing our eyes to the bright halo by which he was surrounded during his brief sojourn on our earth—that we lose sight of the sum of all his teaching. "A new commandment give I unto you that you love one another." "Love one another even as brethren." In order to believers loving each other, as Jesus hath given them commandment, it is not needful that all see alike, or obtain equally clear views of Christ's loveliness. Their views, their desires, their hopes are alike in kind, but by no means in degree. Noah, with all his confidence in God, was not an Enoch, of whom it is stated

that "he walked with God;" and Peter, with his honest, straight-forward zeal, was not a John—they were like-minded in this respect—they were each *born again* from above, and they acted each for the honour and glory of the Lord Jesus; but being differently constituted in point of attainments and capacity, they employed each his own endowments and peculiar graces to advance the same great end. So must it be in the church of Christ: differences in constitution, and greater or less communications of grace, must make no difference in the love of saints; we must still love each other even as brethren. Philemon must love Onesimus—servant though he be—and all the more because the servant with the master acknowledges one Jesus, one Saviour, and one faith. My dear fellow-Christians—and I speak to members of every Christian denomination in this city—forget your differences; forget the points upon which ye differ from each other, and remember more frequently the points on which ye are agreed. Be persuaded to draw the brush across your apparent discordancies, and to magnify your real unity so far as it goes. Why should it not be said now, "Behold these Christians how they love one another?" It cannot be that the "new commandment" is forgotten, or that the name of Christ is less precious unto you than it was to the early Christians—it cannot be that ye have no desire to carry out the spirit and design of our Saviour's mission into the world. Why, then, cease to shew that ye love one another. The candle is not lighted that it may be placed under a bushel. If the love of Christ dwell in you, oh, be persuaded to shew that love towards the brethren which the love of Christ will induce. It may be that mountains may rise and broad oceans roll between you and the land on which ye breathed your first breath; but is that land forgotten; oh no, the land of your adoption may yield you many comforts and much enjoyment, still there is an invisible *something* that connects you with the "*old country*"—the hill-side, or the valley—the church-yard, or the village-green—the placid loch, or the rough sea-shore. The right hand may forget its cunning, but never can a Briton forget the land that gave him birth.—So let the *love* arising from the new birth grow; let it range over all countries, and through all climes; let it hail the brethren on the ice-bound shores of Greenland, and among the sunny isles of the southern sea; let it take up the song of the

sons of "Senim," and waft it across to the Indian shore; like the outstretched arms of the dying Saviour, let it embrace men of every kindred, and nation, and people, and tongue.

3d. The unity prayed for, is a union of "living stones"—of spiritual men in Christ Jesus—of men joined to Christ. Oh, it were well that this were rightly and fully understood; because the question of union, by whomsoever propounded, and at whatever time, if grounded on Scriptural principles, of necessity embraces the question, in regard to those whom it is sought to unite: "Are they joined to Christ"?—for this is held to be a pre-requisite to enduring and profitable union. A union of mere professors were of little, yea, I may say, of no value; for a union, though formed amongst them, never could be lasting. Fancies and dreams, and the forth-puttings of puffed up minds, would soon separate them, and would only serve to widen and deepen the breach that their union at first promised to fill up. A union formed between life and death—between living saints and dead professors—were of no advantage. It is just as if one were to pour the water from the stagnant pool into the living crystal spring.

No such unions as these I have enumerated can ever convince the world of sin, or constrain the world to believe in Jesus as the Saviour from sin. Once and again it has been tried to identify the pagans upon whom the water of baptism has been sprinkled, with the holy and peculiar people of God. How vain the attempt—how dishonoring to Christ—how delusive to many souls! The sheep may bear the brand of the shepherd, and by that brand be known as his; but though all the dogs and all the wolves by which that flock is surrounded were branded with the same brand, it would not change their nature, it would not make them sheep. It is easy, then, to see that not such is the union for which our Master prayed. But certainly he did pray that all they that should believe on his name might be one; and this stamps the union prayed for both subjectively and objectively. It is composed of believing men, and the end for which this ostensible union is desired, is, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Is it, then, a settled point, that those who truly believe in Jesus, who are joined to Him, must be looked for and sought out in any one visible community on earth? I trow not, my hearers. I am a Presbyterian, because it is my confirmed belief

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that the leading way-marks of Presbyterianism are laid down in the Holy Scriptures. But I am not so strongly attached to my Presbyterianism as to say that they only are Christians who can swallow my creed as to ecclesiastical government, and that all who cannot so do are beyond the pale of the Redeemer's flock. Oh, no. Nor will I hesitate to condemn, and to hold up to ridicule and scorn, the man, to whatsoever visible community of Christians he may belong, who, in the spirit and with the pride of ancient Judaism, will claim for himself and his brethren, a monopoly of Heaven's best gifts, and the right of dispensing Heaven's richest treasures. It were assuredly better for believers themselves and better for the world, were they all ostensibly, even as they are virtually, one. But that any one Christian denomination embraces and includes the Christianity of the world, is a libel upon common sense, an averment to which the Holy Scriptures give no support, and the truth of which our common experience disclaims. I cannot help thinking, my hearers, and I guess there are many who agree with me in thinking, that, it is the sure sign of a failing cause, when its present, *its now*, is insufficient to shew its origin and to indicate its end. There have been corrupt churches: the church of Ephesus was one. There are corrupt churches: the church of Rome is one, and the church of England is another. Nor, concerning the vast Presbyterianism of the world, will I say that there is no element of corruption, no evidences of spiritual gangrene in it. No, nor will I offer such an assertion concerning that portion of the Presbyterian church with which I am connected; no, even though she has been called by men not of her communion, and justly too, "the fairest daughter of the reformation." Where, then, are believers? Not in any one church, but, I believe, in all the churches; not under any one system, but under all systems. There are, I doubt not, Fenelons and Pascals still in the corrupt Romish church. There are, I doubt not, Leightons and Jewels in the corrupt Episcopal church. And there are still men of the spirit of Knox and Henderson amongst their Presbyterian posterity, who are as ready as they were, to do battle for Christ's crown and covenant, whenever his rights shall be questioned or the privileges of his people sought to be impaired.

The prayer of the Redeemer has reference to all these believers, and evidently points to a time when Christians shall

forget the many forms of their system in the holy oneness of their creed: when the shibboleths of partizanship shall be forgotten, and "Christ for us and Christ in us" shall be the only password among the people of God. And to all such, the cry of our Lord is, "Come out from amongst them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing;"—"join yourselves to your own company," of which Jesus is the living Head, and then, and then only, will ye realize all the benefits and blessedness of God's being your Father. Yet still carnality will prompt the question, "What visible banner shall wave in the midst of this separated sacramental host?" To this I reply: a visible rallying-point God hath given, around which all believers may safely take their stand; a rallying-point which, the nearer it is approached unto, the more diligently it is looked into, and the more prayerfully it is contemplated, will expel all hostility, undo all prejudices, and render all that so survey it and so swear allegiance to its Lord, more distrustful of the merely human, and more disposed to receive and glory in that only which is manifestly divine. And what is this rallying-point? It is none of those systems to which time and circumstance, and birth, and inborn prejudice, have wedded many minds. It is not the shibboleth of a pliant Episcopacy, nor of a stern and energetic Presbyterianism; it is not the fraternal popedom of Methodism, nor that other system, whose peculiar characteristics are immersion and close communion. That God-given rallying-point is the Bible. Yes, that book of books, is the visible centre to which all believers are invited to approach; and experience has proved that the nearer that Christians come to the Bible, the more do they love that lovely One of whom the Bible testifies, and the more they love Him, just the more do they love one another. Come, then, Christian men, and range yourselves by the side of the Bible; let the Bible, and the Bible alone, be the rule of your faith and the guide of your life; let the Bible be the standard by which your faith and practice are alike tried; let the Bible be the rule by which all your differences are settled, and the sacred oil by which your views and feelings are harmonized. Then ye will behold each other, not in the dim twilight of your separate systems, but in the clear and lustrous effulgence of your common Head.

Carnality will again prompt the question, "Since government is needed, what shall be the form of government under

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which this separated sacramental host shall live?—shall it be the monarchy of Episcopacy—the republic of Presbyterianism—or shall it be the democracy of Independency?" Though I believe Presbyterianism to be the system best adapted for working upon, and, finally, under the hand of God, for subduing the world's ungodliness; and though I believe it to be a great midway station on which the two extremes of Episcopacy and Independency may meet; yet I confess I have little hope of any one of these systems rising upon the ruins of the others, and of any one of them, as they now appear, surviving its brethren. Large and sate with high principle as each of these systems may appear to its subjects, and conscientious and sincere as each may be in holding by his own views, and sanctioned as these views may be by the concurrent testimony of the piety of many ages, and the erudition and high intellect of many schools, yet I think the lesson God would teach us in the present unsettledness of all the systems in the which his believing people are to be found, is, that all these systems must give way, and that from a fusion of the whole God will bring forth a system which theologians will wonder that they did not see in the Bible before: a system based on truth eternal and immutable—Love, heavenly and godlike, sanctifying the whole, and charity throwing her rich benignant mantle over the dark spots of the weaker brethren. Then spirit shall meet with spirit, without resting on the untoward materialism that now first meets the eye. And what mind shall first see in mind shall be a marked and growing approximation to the mind of Christ.

But should even these systems, which I have mentioned, be continued, can there be no harmony, no peace, no unity among the abettors of all? Is it necessary that there should exist a perpetual rancour—a current and recurrent assertion and denial of claims? Surely not. A king may sit securely on his throne, though a president may sit as chief in the councils of his nearest neighbours. A republic and a monarchy, though adjoining, do not, of necessity, command enmity. And why should it be thought a thing impossible that Christian men, from amid all these systems, should feel as brethren—meet as brethren—act as brethren—and fully love as brethren? Is there no common tie of brotherhood among the kindreds of the earth?—no bond of affinity and relationship

that can overstep geographical boundaries, and cross broad oceans and high mountains, and yet find its image in every human countenance, and its influences on every shore? There shall be when the antipathies of opposing systems shall have ceased to rage, and when a world-wide Christianity, felt, realized, lived, shall bid away among the records of the past the unworthy aphorism that "man to man is an anomaly." What has given to this aphorism so much of its seeming truthfulness? What but the power and prejudice of system. The Presbyterian feels alarmed for the Episcopalian, because his system has suffered at his hands; the Episcopalian mourns the heresy of the Presbyterian, and complacently consigns him to God's uncovenanted mercies; while the Independent condemns both for that they walk in darkness and have no light. Do not, my hearers, misunderstand me. I speak of the systems; and when I find myself evil spoken of by either, I say it is the system that curses me, it may not be the man.

But still the question remains—"Can the unity of brotherhood not be realized though manifested under different systems?" I say it can—it ought—it must be, if Christianity be the truth of God. I find in the word of God what the basis of Christianity is. It is "Christ for us, and Christ in us"—"Christ *for* me, and Christ *in* me." That is the sum of my creed. It lies deep in the confession of Thomas—"My Lord and my God." It is embraced in the declaration of Paul concerning Jesus—"Who loved me and gave himself for me." It is the very life of every one who can say, "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." But is there no Roman Catholic that holds by this grand scriptural dogma? Has the spirit of a Fenelon, indeed, gone forth from the hundred millions of men and women worshippers? Is there now no Luther in the monastic cell?—no meek Melancthon in the halls of learning? I cannot doubt it; and God will bring them out of her. Is there no Episcopalian who holds by this truth? Yes, many, very many of God's peculiar people. So among Presbyterians, and so among Independents. But I might ask, is it because we are attached to a system that we have arrived at that blessed truth? Certainly not. Apart from all systems that truth has stood; and when the systems that now are, shall have passed away, that truth shall stand—the bulwark of each believer's hope—the joy and rejoicing of each believer's soul.

Oh, yes, that truth made Patmos a paradise to John, and the prison in Rome a palace to Paul; and wherever it is now realized, and by whomsoever it is felt, it still connects our hearts with heaven, and fuses some measure of the spirituality of heaven with the aspiring materialism of earth.

Now I have arrived at that point in the inquiry when it becomes necessary to declare, at least, my opinion, whether unity—the true *unitas Fratrum*—can exist without an external uniformity. Most unhesitatingly I declare my opinion in the affirmative. It may. And whether it be owned or no, it does so exist. Yes, and if time shall not disclose its existence, eternity will. But it appears to me that unity in diversity is a law of nature, and that it more manifestly sets forth the glory of the great Creator than would the existence of a stern and unvarying uniformity. Look to this assembly, how varied are the countenances—not two exactly alike. Look to earth's families—uniformity even there is regarded as a monstrosity, while unity is sought for as in its own place. Look to these heavens, “one star differeth from another star in glory;” and yet the absence of uniformity only brings the whole before us in brighter and more pleasing array. Yes, and a few more brief years will shew, in the firmament of the church, the same blithesome rule prevailing—unity in diversity—the lion and the lamb lying down together.

Let me appeal to you that now hear me. I may be right or wrong in the sentiments I have advanced—but be assured I give them honestly, and I give them without fear. In many breasts they will find an echo, and in many more they may appear as the chimera of a distempered imagination. Let me appeal then, I say, to you all upon this one point. Is there any thing involved in the principles upon which the ecclesiastical systems are founded that must of necessity keep apart and separate from each other those that are joined unto Christ? I say no. Then why is it that men while they are professedly enamoured with an indefinite something called the Church, why is it that they can without compunction obscure the glory of Christ's supremacy by limiting his kingdom to their own narrow fraternity? Why is it that men professing to know the truth and to teach the truth, are yet so much strangers to the very genius of truth as to deny its existence, and its influences upon and among all who are not with them? Oh! let not your

systems usurp the throne that Christ should occupy. Come near, O Christians of every denomination, come near and nearer to each other. Is there common to you all "One Lord, one faith, one baptism,"—one highway to the city of Zion—one bright vision of glory to be revealed?—then let your love eradicate your divisions, else be assured that your divisions will soon eradicate your love. Under whatever system it may be your's to sit, oh! never forget that "One is your Master, even Christ," that "He is no respecter of persons," that "neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Can ye rest in these principles, can ye rejoice in these principles, and yet remain aloof the one from the other? Oh, no! ye cannot. If Jesus be to you the grand centre to which your thoughts, desires, and longings tend—then did ye never observe the spokes in a wheel, how that the nearer they come to the centre the nearer they approach each other—so, my beloved brethren, the nearer ye come to Christ the centre, just the more closely will ye draw towards one another. There will then be a mutual bearing of one another's burdens—a mutual helping influence realized—the living stones made manifest. It will then be felt that in the temple of the Lord, just as in the habitation of men, the more closely the stones lie to each other the stronger does each become, while at the same time the strength of the whole building is established. Such is the union for which our Master prayed, and for it each believer is bound to pray and labour. And yet my hearers I cannot close this discourse without adverting to one point on which I would not wish to be misunderstood. I have said that Christ for us and Christ in us, and not our connection with any special ecclesiastical system, is the joy of the Church—and yet I would not be understood as condemning all systems,—nor according to the principles, which I have laid down, is the condemnation or even the denial of all systems necessary in order to the ostensible oneness of Christ's people. I am attached to my system, and I admire it, and the more because I believe that I can clearly trace its lineaments on the page of inspiration. So I believe does the intelligent Episcopalian view his episcopacy, and the Independent his independency. In order to this union, it is not required that the smallest jot of what is believed to be truth should be compromised or yielded. No, the

songs of Zion may ascend as gratefully to the mercy seat from the heart of a godly Episcopalian as from that of a Presbyterian. My advice to all of you would be, look for yourselves into the word of God, and hold by that system that you believe comes nearest to the mind of Christ. Hold by it. "Sell it not." But oh let not your views of the mere circumstances of your faith overwhelm the Divine amplitude of the Christian spirit. Draw near the grand centre—and from the throne of our Mediator King the holy fire shall descend and shall lick up the bitter waters that have gathered in the trenches of jealousy, and shall kindle the fuel that ought ever to be kept blazing on the altar of Christian charity. Ye will then recognize your brethren, not by the badge upon their shoulders, but by the image of Jesus engraven on their souls. Ye will look at them, and watch their growing meetness for the saints' inheritance, and admire the growing brilliancy of that which is their joy and crown, not as they are members of an earthly fellowship, but as they are members of Christ's body, and consecrated kings and priests unto God. Nor need you fear, with such a spirit in you, to survey each other's systems, for then your controversies shall be without virulence, and your conversation without rancour. Instead of exposing each other's weaknesses, ye will strive to conceal them. Alexander the Great commissioned a celebrated artist to take his likeness. The artist consented; and yet there was a scar over Alexander's eye, which occasioned him great perplexity. He feared to offend the fickle conqueror by transferring the scar to the canvass; but, after some study, he produced a faithful likeness and yet concealed the scar; for he represented Alexander resting his head upon his hand, the fore-finger of which hid the unseemly thing. So, my brethren in Christ Jesus, when ye are called upon to depict your neighbour's system, do not expose its scars. Rather bring out in high relief the good that it contains, and the good that it hath done, and these will palliate and conceal what may appear to you to be evil.

I will now proceed to open up another view of that union for which our Saviour prayed, (*viz.:*) As it respects the operations of the church in and upon the world. What has been already advanced in regard to unity of faith, and profession, and love, and character, will have prepared you for the remark which I am now about to make, (*viz.:*) that the church of Christ,

composed as it is of spiritual men—born from above—and in virtue of Christ's atoning death made heirs of glory, sustains a certain relation to the world without, which relation is not sustained in its power and integrity by any one sect or by any particular system. This remark is of more importance than may at first sight appear, inasmuch as it strikes at the root of that dogmatical pride, which, as it exists in more than one sect of our little day, constrains them to manifest a self-exalting spirit, as if to them and to them alone belonged the great Divine Commission, and as if it were the duty and the privilege of universal man to forego the rights of reason, and to render, without enquiry, an implicit and unquestioning faith in certain great and important announcements. I will only observe, that the day of implicit faith in any assertion that is not directly taught in the Holy Scriptures, or that is not a legitimate inference from what the Holy Scriptures do teach, has passed by. Men now-a-days will read, and think, and enquire for themselves; and it is not the dogmatism of the mere ecclesiastic that will impress upon his teaching the stamp of infallibility, or carry it home to the enquiring intellect with all the power and ascendancy that truth is fitted to bear. To the church, then, composed as it is of living stones, a great work is entrusted. It is neither more nor less than the ingathering of the sheep into Christ's fold. And until that the number of God's elect shall have been accomplished, the prayers and labours of every living stone in the Divine temple must be continued. This is the work, I say, of Christ's purchased inheritance—of his church—not of any one sect, or party, or denomination, with which the people of God may be connected, but solely *their* work, to the carrying out and accomplishment of which, it is theirs to give their individual and united labours. The hostility of the natural man to the high claims which the church prefers in the name and on the behalf of her exalted King, and only Head, renders the work of his church of a twofold character. She occupies a position in which it behoves her to act both aggressively and on the defensive. Not only is she attacked from behind and from within, and from every side, by those who are strangers to her origin, and hostile to her high pretensions, but it behoves her, as in possession of the great Divine Commission, to make headway in the world. If it be not well with human schemes and systems

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that are born to last but for a day, when the aim of their upholders is low, or when their strength begins to fail, when there seems an end to all their exertions and endeavours in their behalf, then, also, it is not well, when all that a church is content to do is to hold her own. She was born that she might grow, that her boughs might extend over all rivers, and that under her branches all nations might find a shelter. She shews too much of a self-dependent spirit, when, because assaulted by adversaries on the one hand, or tossed by internal dissensions on the other, she waxes weary in the great work, and sets herself down on her *own inability to do any good thing*. The edge of the axe is only sharpened by repeated revolutions of the grind-stone. So, my hearers, by repeated conflicts with the enemy, God will have his church to increase in might and beauty. It evinces the most culpable forgetfulness of her great commission, the very design of her creation, the very glory of her constitution, when she loses sight of the subtilty against which she has to defend herself, and the hostility against which she has to make head. It is not to exalt herself, nor to exhibit boastingly her fair proportions, but to glorify God in the salvation of his people, that God called her into being. Now, the question is, can the church, when disunited and divided into rival parties, fulfil aright her great commission. Can she act faithfully and fully against the opposition by which she is assailed on the one hand, and the error and ungodliness that meet her on the other? Most unhesitatingly I give it as my opinion that she cannot. God's believing people may and do labour under the different systems to which they are attached, and it may be with all the zeal and faithfulness that they can command. And yet there is a wanting what will give range and strength to their labours. Yea, there is a wanting what will give them a hearing at the hands of those upon whom they may attempt to operate. There are a wanting that peace and concord, that heartiness and unanimous zeal, that command respect and admiration wherever they appear. And thus it is that though each sect and party, where heartiness and zeal appear, endeavours to carry out the purposes for which it is believed that it is called into being; yet the labours of such being detached and uncombined are not productive even in our day of the permanent and beneficial results that we might expect were the Christian forces consolidated and their ener-

gies combined. Though there be then a unity among the people of God—a unity which is, alas, by reason of prejudice and system, in a great measure unfelt, and, therefore, unproductive of good fruit; yet in our day that unity appears as if it lay like a still and motionless statue cut out of cold and insensate marble—it does not now breathe, and live, and move, and stand forth in chastest beauty. Ah, if the apostle had reason to blame the church of Corinth for that there were divisions in her, he might be asked in our day to go the round of all the churches, and point out *the one* in which more blameworthy divisions did not exist. And yet, were such an one as Paul the aged again to visit the world, and walk his course among the churches, although he might find much that is truly reprehensible in each and in all, he would acknowledge, that as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it, so He will present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Disguise it as Protestant Christians may, and attempt to make up for the evident lack of it, as they do by Bible Society meetings, &c. &c.—to a careful and enquiring observer there is no doubt of the fact, that *the primitive spirit* does not prevail in the church. In one sect there is the desire of ascendancy, as if to it alone were confined the “giving of the law and the promises”—while in other sects there is the sternest opposition to such ascendancy—opposition which neither the characters of men, nor their status in society, nor the high estate to which they may have been lifted, shall be able to overbear. Here the question arises, why should such ascendancy be claimed?—why should it be sought *to coerce men into a belief* of dogmata, which are opposed alike by apostolic practice, and primitive tradition, and common experience, and right reason; and the more, as this ascendancy is based rather upon the *extraneous* substantial of Christian faith—upon the *channel* through which the grand peculiarities of the gospel are brought to bear upon mankind—than upon the essentials of a living and energetic Christianity? My hearers, I tell you that it is an aphorism of the “Prince of Darkness,” that “opposition is the soul of trade”—when this is applied to the work of the ministry, or in other words, to the cause of Christ; it may answer well for godless men in the ardent pursuit of unblest, and, in reality, unprofitable gain, but it can have no place and no exercise in

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a truly Christianized community. Yet, what is the evident condition of the church in these times?—It is represented by a thousand factions, each claiming to be holier than its neighbour, and, therefore, by so much the more peculiar unto God—each setting itself against the other, as if, for the consummation of Emmanuel's kingdom, it were needful that a continued contest should be maintained among the brethren; and that, not in behalf of the essentials of our faith, for in regard to these most parties professedly belonging to the Church of Christ are agreed, each appealing as it were to the high tribunal of human opinion, yea, to the higher tribunal still of unerring and unchangeable truth in support of the belief, that to it alone belongs the broad arrow of gospel righteousness, and gospel holiness. Can it be believed, that a family thus split up and divided can fulfil the high behest of its heavenly Father? Impossible. The divisions among Christians stand forth as the great stumbling-block in the way of the world's conversion unto God. Nor will this stumbling-block be removed until that the heralds of the cross shall consent to tie a millstone around the neck of their denominational distinctiveness, and bury it deep in the ocean of the past, and stand forth in the armour of the living God, proclaiming faithfully and without fear, "Christ and Him crucified." The heathen in the midst of a Christian community can point to the infirmities of individual Christians, and to the divisions existing in the Christian church, and in the spirit of the infamous Pilate—that prototype of religious indifference—can complacently ask, "What is truth?" The heathen abroad, whom it is sought to instruct in the knowledge of the living God, and of Jesus whom he hath sent, may point to the same, and say, "Here is the Episcopalian with his many ceremonies; there is the Presbyterian with his simple faith; here is the Wesleyan with his classes, and there the Baptist with his ablutions—each surveying the other with watchful and jealous eye, and each regarding his own tenets as alone the truth of God. Either your God has many minds, or some of yourselves are greatly in error. Is it not better that we should remain steadfast and immovable in the faith of our fathers, than yield to a system that allows of so many adverse opinions among its adherents?" Oh! I fear that this position, untenable as it is, must too often bear with a powerful ascendancy upon the

minds and feelings of the untutored heathen: And shall this sectarian rivalry be permitted to continue? Oh, were it not better that by one mighty and unanimous stroke it were broken into fragments, and instantaneously replaced by the truly primitive and apostolic rivalry, "Who shall do most for Christ." The spirit of the world's opposition to truth is not yet broken, nor is the strength of its hosts as yet laid low. Why, oh Christians, will ye remain intent only on what are at best but doubtful disputations—blind to the prevalence of iniquity, and indifferent to the great commission intrusted to your charge? Is this the love, is this the loyalty, that ye owe to Him who redeemed you? Look to the iniquity that stands unabashed by your very doors—that walks your streets without shame—that tampers with your own and your children's dearest interests—that, in the fascinating garb of an angel of light, cloaks the malignity of an agent of Satan. Survey the extent of Satan's dominions on the earth, and the slight and scarcely perceptible influence which the living and aggressive Christianity of half a century has had upon them, and, surely, ye will see that ye cannot, without treachery to your Lord and danger to yourselves, allow any longer a fruitless war of parties among you. There was a time in the history of our fatherland when a false and hateful liberalism, the offshoot of a revolution in an adjoining country, attempted to grapple with and overpower the Christianity of that age—among families and among societies the embers of unholy dissension were widely spread abroad—the ties of neighbourhood and even brotherhood were well nigh severed, and almost every one looked with the fearful eye of jealousy upon the doings of his nearest neighbours—a cloud of terrible forebodings hovered over all the land—men held their breath for fear—suddenly and with all the stunning force of a loud thunder peal, the cry went forth to the land's end, that the French invaders had landed on our shores. In the streets of the cities was heard the trumpet of war, while on every mountain top the fiery beacon blazed. In a moment the voice of dissension was hushed, and the only controversy that existed was about when and where the enemy should be met, and how the nation's united valour might be most effectively employed. So must it be in the church of Christ: the united agency of Protestant Christendom would make Satan tremble; but so long as he knows that he has only to fear the rivalry of sects, just so long will the reign of error be maintained.

III. I would now direct your minds to some of the beauties and advantages of this unity.

In my text Jesus prays for it; and in his public teaching he enjoins it; thus He says, "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." Observe, He does not enjoin a new duty; but merely gives a new commandment. The duty of mutual love was as old as the time when there were only two inhabitants on the earth; but among the Jews, prejudice, malice and blindness to their own interests had so impaired their knowledge even of natural religion, that it was a new thing for them to love one another. Mark, then, how He sets forth his own love as a motive to their loving one another—"As I have loved you." Never was there such a motive presented to any body of men before. "Behold," saith He, "I have loved you with an everlasting love, and, therefore, with loving-kindness have I drawn you." This love of His, nothing could quench—not death, nor the grave, nor Satan. It is this love that He imparts to his believing children: He desires that they should love one another even as He has loved them; and by this love, as if it were the livery of his household, he desires that his children should be known and recognised. The disciples of John were known among men by the austerity of their lives; the disciples of the Pharisees by their bigotry and intolerant assumptions; the disciples of Aristotle by their devotedness to ethics; and of Pythagoras by their adherence to science; but Jesus will have his disciples known by their love and affection one towards another—for this he prays—yea, he preaches it—He gives them a new and all-perfect model of it; and then he adds, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples"—not by the miracles which I will enable you to work—not by your casting out devils from others, but by your casting out from among yourselves all jarrings and dissensions, all jealousies and strifes, all evil-speaking and back-biting; and by loving one another even as I have loved you, shall all men know that ye are my disciples. This, then, my dear hearers, is Emmanuel's command to you, "that ye love one another."

2d. This unity among believers would establish and confirm them. Were it possible to separate between one sunbeam and all its brethren, how bright soever the beam might be, it would be valueless; it could not of itself enliven or warm; its influences at least would not be perceptible; and were it even to suffer no obscuration, winter would be winter all the year round. It is the harmony, the oneness of many beams, that

brings out the world's beauties, nature's joyousness, and the glee and the gladness of human feelings; each imparts a lustre to the whole in the very relation which each bears to its neighbour. So in the church—when Christians go hand in hand together, “being of one heart and of one mind,” how powerful, and always for good, is the body which they unitedly compose. Take a bundle of rods, and with all your strength ye cannot break them; so long as they are tied together they defy your power; but if ye desire their destruction, then take them the one from the other, and you will certainly succeed. So in the church—Satan tried to break the church's Head—in that he failed; and then he stretched forth his leprous hands over the members of his body, and too well has he succeeded in infecting them. It was the saying of a man well skilled in the strange anomalies of human character, “Public societies may wield the world's destinies, if they do not kill themselves by division.” This trite remark embodies the saying of our Saviour, “If a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.” The Israelites, in going up to Jerusalem were accustomed to travel in companies, nor was it thus, only in order to self defence, but also in order to mutual accommodation and comfort. “As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend.” The friendship of Zion's travellers is not like the friendship of the world—a compact between necessity and selfishness—it is the union and the harmony of kindred minds; they are travelling the same road, they mind the same things, they breathe the same desires, they speak the same language, they are members of the same family, and heirs of the same inheritance. Being in reality thus closely associated, they share each other's sorrows, and are helpers together of each other's joys. By taking sweet counsel together, they nourish each other's piety, “for as ointment and sweet perfume rejoice the heart, so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.” This desire on the part of the child of God *for his own company*, is beautifully exhibited in the conduct both of Peter and Paul. No sooner has Peter escaped from his armed keepers, and from the prison, than he seeks the house of Mary, where his brethren are assembled to plead with God for his captive servant. Paul has been no sooner rescued from the prison of error, and from the pride and the prejudice, and the mental and moral darkness that had so long kept his soul in bondage, than he sought to join himself to the company of the dis-

ciples. And again, when Paul *the aged*, on his way to Rome, a prisoner for Christ, had arrived at Apii Forum, and held counsel with the brethren who came to condole with him, it is said, that "he thanked God and took courage." Yes, my dear hearers, it is by this sweet communion of kindred spirits that the conviction is borne in upon our minds, "that we are not solitary," we travel not alone, the perils that may assail us in our pilgrimage are not *our peculiar* destiny—other travellers there are on the same road with us—they have their sorrows and their joys too—each one may deem his own the heaviest—"the heart knoweth its own bitterness." Yet still the Christian's enquiry will be, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon, for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions." (Song i. 7).

3d. This unity is a special part of the covenant; yes, the very covenant in which God engages to write his law on our hearts, and to put his fear in our inward parts, contains also this precious promise—"I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and of their children after them."—(Jeremiah xxxii. 39). Oh day to be longed for and prayed for, when "the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one."—(Zech, xiv. 9). We cannot, my hearers, approach the altar without praying, that this spirit of unity may be more abundantly given to the church; and what shall we plead in prayer but these sweet promises of God, that "are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus." O let your cry come up before God, that if for his own glory He would hasten on this blessed time when heart-rending divisions shall cease—when the bones of the church, long torn on the rack of dissension and unbrotherly strife, shall all be put in joint again—when the church of Christ shall stand forth before the world "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

4th. This unity for which Jesus prays is one of the instrumentalities by which the world shall be brought to the belief of the truth. It is needless to enlarge upon this, seeing that Christ himself, in my text, explicitly lays it down, "that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me;" so that what preaching and miracles did in other days, we may expect to see brought about by unity and mutual love. Counsels, invitations and warnings, may be

all alike unheeded, but let the world see the power and peace-bearing influences of the Gospel, not theoretically believed, but felt, realized, and lived in your own conversation, and in your own conduct—let the world see by your self-denial, by your purity of conduct, by your holy cheerfulness and alacrity in the discharge of duty, and especially by the love that ye bear one towards another, what the self-evidencing power of Gospel truth is, and the world will understand, by God's blessing, that a religion that truly enlarges the human heart, that expands its desires, and binds all who receive it in a league of holy brotherhood, is, to say the least of it, certainly worthy of the world's most earnest consideration.

IN CONCLUSION.

In drawing my observations on Christian unity to a close, I will be allowed the remark:—I trust that the conscience of the *least of God's little ones* has not been wounded by anything that I have advanced. The subject to which your attention has been directed is one that lies very near to my own heart, and it may be, that in the heat and warmth of my feelings, I may have given utterance to language which to some may have appeared too strong—if so, I regret it; and from such, my appeal is to the *Great Searcher of all hearts*. I have not designedly sought to offend any, but rather, with God's help, to conciliate and to affiliate all. Christians of all denominations have my love and my prayers. I love the Free Church of Scotland; her very name is sweet to every Christian mind. I love all in the Established Church of Scotland who love the Lord Jesus; the "very dust" of that church is dear to me. In the Church of England I own many brethren, both in her ministry at home and in her communion; and my prayer for them is, that, in the day of trial that is approaching, "they may be found faithful;" I know their position, their doubts and fears, their joys and hopes, and I know what some of them have confessed to myself, "their need of the prayers of all the brethren." My prayers they have, and shall have; Oh, let them have yours also. God is shaking both the earth and the heavens now; and the things that may be shaken shall, ere long, be taken out of the way; and those things that cannot be shaken shall remain—(Heb. xii. 26-27). All of every denomination, and of every name, who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth, I love, and for them I pray. May the Lord multiply mercies upon them that fear Him, and that call upon his name; may the Lord give you to love one another even as brethren; may he root out from amongst you every element of error, and animosity and strife, and give you *to abide in His love*, and "to walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time;" and to God's name be the praise and glory. *Amen.*

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